

Literature and Psychology

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The entire striving to replace the real father by a more distinguished one is only the expression of the child's longing for the lost time in which his father appeared to him as the most distinguished and strongest of men, his mother the loveliest and most beautiful of women.

— Sigmund Freud
(Commenting on Rank's The Myth of the Birth of the Hero)

It is the very nature of the relationship of the biographer to his subject that he can never have access to such first-hand information as is available to the physician who is working with a patient. Yet, if he knows enough about his subject to warrant the attempt to write about him at all, then the biographer proceeds to set up a series of alternative interpretations, around which the evidence gradually accumulates which finally makes one group of alternatives stand out as more probable than another. In this way a pattern of probable expectations gradually takes shape, whose inner coherence and logic becomes a test of the closeness with which the interpretation approximates reality. The facts, however, must first be gathered.

— Lawrence S. Kubie, M. D.

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Mr. Allen, Assistant Professor of English at Stanford University, has recently published several essays on literature and psychology: on William Faulkner, Katherine Anne Porter, and Ernest Hemingway. He has been the editor of two literary magazines, the Arizona Quarterly and The New Mexico Quarterly; and the editor for two university presses, those at the University of New Mexico and at Stanford University. He is co-author with Frederick J. Hoffman and Carolyn Ulrich of The Little Magazine, Princeton University Press, 1946.

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An associate professor of English at Washington and Jefferson College, Mr. Stein has published Hawthorne's Faust: A Study of the Devil Archetype. He will have a major article on Melville's poetry in a forthcoming issue of ELH, and he has completed a new edition and critical study of Melville's manuscript poetry under a Bollingen Fellowship. He has also published papers on Melville, Hawthorne, Henry James, Yeats, and Conrad, in various periodicals.

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The Associate Editor reviews Nostalgia: A Psychoanalytic Study of Marcel Proust, by Milton L. Miller; and the Editor reviews Tribute to Freud by H. D.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS

** This year's MLA Meeting will be held on the campus of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, on September 9, 10, 11. Professor Stone, Secretary of MLA, was kind enough to schedule our Conference even before receiving our official petition forms. (Incidentally, in a conversation with your Editor, he expressed confidence in the probable future transfiguration of the Conference into a regular Discussion Group.)

** Our Conference has been set for Tuesday, September 10, from 2 to 3:30 p. m. in the room designated as "Union Top Flight." In accordance with the wishes of the Conference as expressed at last year's meeting, it will be devoted to the discussion of a single paper, which will be published in full in the next (August) issue.

** Two other interesting Conferences have come to your Editors' attention. The first, sponsored by Professor Gerber, is described

by him as "largely exploratory" and will be devoted to the so-called "New Realists (Berensford, Cannon, Swinnerton, Mackenzie, W. L. George, et al.)." The other, sponsored by Professor Harold E. Briggs of the University of Southern California, is to be devoted to "Reading Poetry with Comprehension: The Role of Biographical Information." Both of these Conferences are scheduled, alas!, for Monday afternoon, September 9, from 2 to 3:30 p.m., the first in Union Twelfth Night, the second in Education 109.

** The following books have been received for review; reviews, where appropriate, will be published later:

William M. Schutte - Joyce and Shakespeare: A Study in the Meaning of "Ulysses" (Yale University Press, \$4.00). xiv + 197 pp.

Jeannette H. Foster - Sex Variant Women in Literature (Vantage Press, \$5.00). 412 pp.
[This book will not be reviewed.]

MARK TWAIN AND CONSCIENCE

Several observers have noticed that Mark Twain's brand of determinism denies in several works, most notably in The Mysterious Stranger, both the validity of conscience and the possibility of its existence. Yet it is also true that the novella endows several of its more admirable characters with nobly functioning consciences. Twain is as contradictory here as he is when he alternately supports free will and determinism.

In much of his fiction and non-fiction, Twain is fighting a battle against the orthodox or conventional conscience, the conscience which -- for Twain -- conforms to unjust and inhumane social institutions. Twain usually opposes the admirable "natural conscience" or the admirable "social conscience," or both, against the orthodox conscience. The natural moral sense is instinctive, represents the heart's "secret" tendency towards kindness and decency; the social conscience -- a brave complex of anti-authoritarian notions which Twain breathed out of the nineteenth century air but which were born much earlier -- is the expression of a rational, humane mind, a mind superior to outworn and cruel social tradition.

It is interesting at this point to recall the usual definition of conscience accepted by religion. The following Roman Catholic definition would be acceptable to any Christian church:

The tender [orthodox] conscience is a recognition of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's thought or action with a recognition of obligation to think or act correctly in reference to a commonly approved code of ethics or law. /1

It is the "commonly approved code" to which Twain objects, for the code is nine out of ten times wrong.

Twain's natural or instinctive conscience is the "lax conscience" condemned by the Roman Church, condemned because it acts in reference to "impulse" rather than approved social code. The Church would also object, I suspect, to Twain's social conscience, since it substitutes individual reason, with its proneness to fallibility, for socially approved ethics and law.

In this essay I will examine Twain's struggle against the orthodox conscience, speculate on the motives for the struggle, and suggest that the conflict helps account for both the strength and weakness of the fiction. I believe that none of Twain's commentators nor Twain himself sees the consciences for what they are, or has an adequate idea of what accounts for them.

Twain has several complaints about the orthodox conscience, but there are four which are most frequent. One way of attacking the orthodox conscience is illustrated in "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg." In this story an entire village deserts its morality in a greedy struggle for a bag of money. Thus the orthodox conscience, even when it subscribes to a humane ethical code, is exposed as impotent when confronted with temptation. Another attack, perhaps best illustrated in The Mysterious Stranger, contends that the orthodox conscience is blind, "always choosing" between right and wrong, "and nine cases out of ten" preferring the wrong. Usually, however, the conventional moral code is condemned not because of its impotence or its irrationality but because of its timid conformity to benighted mores. This condemnation is a major theme in much of Twain's fiction, most notably in The Mysterious Stranger, A Connecticut Yankee, Joan of Arc, Huckleberry Finn, and Pudd'nhead Wilson. The rep-

/ Thomas Higgins, Man as Man: The Science and Art of Ethics, 1943, p. 130

rehensible codes to which the individual orthodox conscience conforms are many; and, as Twain argues in The Mysterious Stranger, they "are all based upon that large defect in your race -- the individual's distrust of his neighbor, and his desire, for safety's or comfort's sake, to stand well in his neighbor's eye."

The orthodox conscience is never more of a reality than when it punishes its victims for their wrong-doings, actual or imaginary. Mr. and Mrs. Richards of Hadleyburg Corrupted are cruelly dealt with, and Huck Finn is convinced he will go to hell for transgressing against his orthodoxy. Twain himself, as his autobiographical writings amply reveal, was tortured throughout his life by guilt feelings. He persistently reveals feelings of unrealistic guilt about the death of a younger brother, a son, a daughter, a wife, even a tramp and a couple of boyhood friends. Perhaps Twain's main complaint against the conventional conscience is its power to inflict unjust mental torture.

The guilt feelings inspired by Huck Finn's orthodoxy become such a burden as to force him to discover a new kind of moral sense -- the natural one. Edgar Branch has observed:

When Huck saves Jim from the two Negro-hunters, he realizes that his feelings for the humane way to act do not accord with 'right' conduct, but he blames his feelings, not the code, for the discrepancy. He can submit neither to his conventional conscience nor to his personal feelings, and he decides to let expediency determine future action. But unforeseen circumstances upset experience. The betrayal of Jim by the King and the Duke leads Huck to his classic decision: 'All right, then, I'll go to hell.' /2

The decision represents the novel's climax, the culmination of Huck's inner struggle about how to treat Jim. Although he is really convinced of his eternal damnation, he is also at last in possession of his manhood: he has discovered the natural moral sense, the instinctive feeling for the humane way to act, and that natural moral sense is a weapon against the orthodoxy which Twain and his heroes never forsake.

The contemporary reader cannot accept as easily as his nineteenth century ancestor the conflict in Huckleberry Finn. He is left with the suspicion that Huck's natural conscience is in part an artificial creation, little more than a normal and properly functioning orthodox conscience. After all, Huck's "natural" decision comes only after his humbling himself before a Negro whose love he has outraged. Huck's brave decision is at least partly motivated by a traditional, orthodox loyalty.

Like the typical American social conscience, Twain's moral fervor focuses on what Gunnar Myrdal has designated "the American Creed": a belief in equality, the "natural" right of every man to equal opportunity --

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social, economic, political religious. /3 Twain vigorously opposes anything which threatens this creed. The threat is usually overweening personal, governmental, militaristic, or ecclesiastical authority. There is no ambivalence, no confusion here; and the value of Twain's work frequently derives in part from the social conscience which flames in most of his writing.

But if there is no confusion, there often is a fevered, almost abnormal intensity of emotional charge involved in his insistence on reform. It is an emotional charge which can swerve into didacticism. The Colonel Sherburn episode in Huckleberry Finn is a familiar example. And even that equitable citizen of the universe, Satan, is made to desert his cynical attitude toward the human race when he speaks of mankind's slavery to authoritarian institutions. On the whole, however, Twain's social conscience serves him far better than his natural conscience as a weapon against the orthodox.

Of course neither the social or the natural conscience can pester its owner with guilt feelings: guided respectively by right reason and natural instinct, they are infallible guides to truth and justice.

The facts of Twain's life are abundant, for Twain himself revealed them in a hundred places, and a dozen biographers, most notably Bernard De Voto and Dixon Wecter, have verified them. The latter two, and a host of recent writers of scholarly essays, agree on three important observations: 1) Twain during his childhood was an emotionally troubled boy, a child of "nervous instability," as De Voto informs us; 2) this nervous instability reflects itself in Twain's writing most frequently as an emotional conflict between free will and determinism; 3) the emotional instability was caused by the well-known experiences of terror, horror, and death which Twain saw as a child. De Voto catalogues these traumatic episodes with colorful detail in the third chapter of his Mark Twain's America, and I do not propose to rehearse the scenes to which the sensitive boy was exposed in the streets and houses of violent Hannibal.

De Voto and his disciples cannot be lightly dismissed. Those terrors and horrors must have upset the boy. But a child who feels secure -- understood and loved -- is not easily shaken by terrors and horrors that originate outside the home. Such outside experiences cannot in themselves account for the persistent nightmares, sleep-walkings, and courtings of death which plagued Twain's childhood. (He deliberately exposed himself to measles and almost died; he nearly drowned on nine different occasions.) What can shake a child to the bones, rattle his teeth and emotions for life, is the suspicion that he is unwanted, unloved. This is the usual and perhaps only cause recognized by contemporary psychology, Freudian or non-Freudian, for emotional ravages such as Twain suffered during his childhood. What evidence is there that Twain may have been the victim of childhood parental rejection?

^{2/} Edgar M. Branch, "The Two Providences: Thematic Form in 'Huckleberry Finn,'" College English, Jan., 1950

^{3/} Gunnar Myrdal, with the assistance of Richard Sterner and Arnold Rose, An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy, Chap. I, 1944

All of the biographers have recognized that the marriage between Jane Lampton and John Marshall Clemens was not based on affection. Edgard Lee Masters, most succinctly though not as well as De Voto, states the essential fact:

She [Jane] never loved her husband, and the home in which Twain grew up was cold. His father and mother never manifested any affection for each other.

Of all the biographers only Van Wyck Brooks has contended that Twain's emotional difficulties were a result of parental treatment rather than of outside forces. Brooks sees young Twain as the victim of a possessive, Calvinistic mother who, not loving her husband, showered a smothering affection and a rigid moral sense on her fifth child, Sam. For Brooks, Jane Lampton Clemens is mainly responsible for damaging Twain's native artistic genius. Brooks might better have seen John Marshall Clemens as mainly responsible.

John Clemens kept his children (and everyone else) at an emotional distance. Twain remarks that the only time he saw an embrace exchanged between his father and any member of the family was when, on his death bed, he kissed his daughter. How could Sam or any of the other children approach such an austere father, feel that he loved them? They could not. At least three of the children (Sam, Henry, and Orion) became nervous, anxious children -- baffled and confused in their frustrated attempts to obtain his approval and love.

The boys may well have been thrown too close to their mother, for she was the one to whom they could turn -- if they were capable of turning at all. If they did, and if she accepted them, as Twain seems to insist, one can grant with Brooks that she might have been overly possessive. This would be especially a probable response towards the physical weakling, Sam, the child who was born two months prematurely. It would be likely, but I am not altogether convinced of the fact. There is simply not enough evidence.

The commonly accepted belief is that Aunt Polly of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn is an accurate though exaggerated portrait of Twain's mother, and that Tom himself is an accurate though exaggerated portrayal of the boy Sam Clemens. Aunt Polly does not appear frantically possessive to me, and Tom's rebellion against her seems to me unrealistically motivated.

But whatever may have been Mrs. Clemens's inadequacies as a mother, I am certain that Mr. Clemens is mainly responsible for Sam's nightmares, sleep-walking, and death wish, as well as for such rebellious behavior as playing hookey, slipping out at night, or sneaking off on forbidden swimming expeditions. I suspect that if the father of Tom Sawyer had appeared in fiction, Tom's rebellious good boy, bad boy behavior would be much more plausible and convincing.

Tom Sawyer is a curious story in more ways than one. The novel can be read as a satire on Sunday School morality, as Walter Blair has suggested. ^{4/} The subject and

^{4/} Walter Blair, "On the Structure of Sawyer," Modern Philology, XXXVII, 1939

theme is childhood revolt against an adult conception of the "Model Boy." More generally the subject and theme is childhood rebellion against the orthodox conscience. Tom is mischievously bedeviling his Aunt Polly as the novel opens. During the better part of the first fifteen chapters Tom is something of a "problem child," not only for his Aunt Polly but for most St. Petersburg adults. Revolt reaches a climax in Chapter 14 when Tom, Huck, and Joe Harper decide to flee the cramping restrictions of society. Escaping to Jackson's Island in the middle of the great river, they feel an exhilarating sense of release. The town, suspecting that they have drowned, worriedly drags the river, giving them up for dead, and conducts memorial services in the church. The boys sneak back, observe their own funerals, and finally reveal themselves. They apologize for their trick (it is really more serious than a thoughtless trick) and resolve to live better lives. But Tom is soon astray, and by Chapter 18 is again concocting an elaborate and cruel scheme for affronting Aunt Polly. Here is the pattern of revolt and contrition that plays itself out throughout the rest of the novel.

Tom Sawyer's struggle with his orthodoxy conscience is, on the surface at least, not a matter for serious concern for Twain or his characters. Tom's breaking of society's rules, his confessions, his punishments, his exonerations, are presumably light adventures not to be taken too seriously. The hi-jinks are just "boy nature" according to Aunt Polly and apparently this is also Twain's conviction.

Yet, granting Twain his prerogative of exaggeration, and Aunt Polly her condonement of "boy nature," one is forced to recognize that Tom's revolts are both rather frequent and violent. If Tom were around today, he would be labeled a juvenile delinquent.

What Tom, Aunt Polly, and Twain fail to comprehend is that Tom represents a lonely, frustrated boy who is desperately attempting to obtain someone's approval. Since Aunt Polly seems to give Tom a sufficient though somewhat fussy love, there is no plausible reason for his constant bid for her attention. There must be an unseen, unheard character to whom Tom is appealing.

Twain's life reveals that character, the horrible and dearly loved reality, of whom Twain rarely spoke from the age of twelve onwards. Tom's rebellion may have been partly against Aunt Polly's cramping solicitousness and ardent Calvinism, but it was probably more against John Marshall Clemens's unapproachable rigidity. Here is probably the explanation, the motivation for Tom's and Twain's, good boy, bad boy behavior. He is trying to obtain his father's approval by being a good boy. Failing, in desperation, he tries being a bad boy. All he can do is to run the circle from goodness to badness.

If the circumstances of a loveless marriage were granted, psychiatrists would insist that Tom's and Twain's rebellion was inevitable. A strong guilt-feeling, a double-edged one, would also be inevitable. Twain would feel guilty about his rebellion; and, more deeply, he would feel guilty about his parents' marriage. To some extent a child always holds himself responsible for parental conflict, and even tries to improve the rela-

tionship, hoping that improvement will make love and recognition possible for himself. Twain, necessarily I agree, tried many kinds of behavior in his attempts to rectify the coldness between his parents, the two extremes being the good boy, bad boy patterns which loom so monumentally in Twain's entire life and in Tom Sawyer.

These childhood guilts probably account for Twain's guilty, masochistic conscience -- for his life-long necessity to blame himself for this catastrophe and that death for which he was in no way responsible. When the burden of this deep, unconscious guilt became too heavy, he sometimes fled to his opiate theories of life as a dream or of life as determined by external circumstances. For these notions, psychological defenses really, could momentarily exonerate him from his guilty anger against his father, and at the same time perform the fabulous trick of exonerating his father of all evil.

The unconscious guilt feeling, all too simply outlined in the preceding paragraphs, would normally demand a number of psychological defenses. Like determinism and the dream, Twain's various consciences are probably "intellectualized emotional defenses" constructed out of a frantic necessity to alay the pain of his guilty anxiety. That the natural and social consciences were reputable concepts in Twain's time, and that the social conscience served him especially well, does not invalidate the probability that Twain used them as defenses against his deep anxiety. The natural and social concepts of conscience could also exonerate both himself and his father, for these consciences asserted that he was independent of his father or anyone else, and had always been. Father could not have damaged him, really, because a man's soul is his own. Either he is born with it (the natural conscience), or he fashions it through "logic and argument" (the social conscience).

The orthodox conscience probably is a camouflaged expression of the conflict between Twain's feelings of love and hostility toward his father. This conflict, or ambivalence, is an interesting one. On the one hand there is plenty of evidence that Twain accepted and cherished his father's "free-thinking" social conscience; there is no rebellion against his father's social code, or indeed against the keen sense of ethics which both father and mother exhibited. But Twain also saw his father as weak and ineffectual, blind and irrational. The element of hostility in Twain's double and conflicting feeling about his father was, however, far stronger than the element of love. Thus Twain usually accuses the orthodox conscience not of blindness or ineffectiveness, but of timid conformity to inhumane authoritarian codes. Twain's disguise of his hostility is fantastic, but it does serve his warped emotional need. Perhaps more clearly than any of the other masks, the orthodox conscience defense reveals Twain as a rebel against the authority which did not sufficiently respect and love Sam Clemens.

This essay is, I realize, a challenge to De Voto disciples, but it is no longer a fact, as De Voto so angrily contended in 1932, that only a psychiatrist can express an opinion about the origins of Twain's emotional inse-

curity.* Given the essential facts, and a considerable understanding of depth psychology, the literary scholar can estimate the meaning of Twain's insecurity, and he can reasonably hope to arrive at enlightening and just conclusions about it. For psychology has at last made available to the lay understanding a good many principles which motivate human behavior. The importance of parental influence — the knowledge of what parental patterns cause what childhood responses — is especially well understood.

There are dangers of course. It is all too easy to rationalize the evidence, or to ignore evidence which is not congenial to one's theory. And it is easy to delude oneself about one's grasp of psychological principles. But the same dangers beset any adventurer into any wilderness, whether that wilderness be one of intellectual and social history or of individual psychological motivation.

We can no longer ignore the evident fact that parents do influence their children, that such influence is likely to be more important in explaining a writer and his art than all other influences combined, and that parental influence can be understood by the student of literature. All he needs is to learn a good deal of psychology and have the courage to use it -- if his particular subject demands its use.

Mark Twain, The PMLA, and Sexuality

Soon after my essay was finished, PMLA (September, 1956) published "Mark Twain and Sexuality," by Alexander E. Jones. The substance of the Jones article can be summarized briefly: the source of Twain's "guilt complex" is probably "sexual conflict," and Twain's nervous "attitude toward sex influenced him as an artist."

Mr. Jones has brought together a valuable collection of quotation to demonstrate Twain's disturbed sexual feelings, but the "sexual conflict" is not seen clearly as a manifestation of love-hostility, ambivalence.

* Editor's note. By 1938 Mr. De Voto seems to have substantially altered this opinion, as witness these quotations from the Saturday Review of Literature for April 5th of that year:

[A novel] is the distillation and collaboration and appraisal of the novelist's experience: surely we can recover his personal history from it. Surely we can read it as roman à clef. . . . Thus, if a literary psychanalyst examining a dozen novels by one man found the same emotional pattern in them all he would feel confident that the pattern was really important to the novelist. . . . The reappearance in a dozen different novels of the same constellation of anxiety, the same kind of relationship between characters, or the same mechanism of gratification or release, would indicate that it expressed a constant need of the novelist. Using this clue, the literary psychoanalyst might then show in detail how the psychic energy involved gave warmth and vitality to many parts of the novel.

Bernard De Voto, "Romans à Clef"

This partial failure accounts for the weakness of the key statement found at the bottom of page 605. Admitting that Twain, "even as a small boy," had "a tendency to blame himself for nearly every calamity occurring in Hannibal," Jones follows with the observation: "the guilt arising from sexual conflict gave this already established habit both direction and intensity." Thus, although Mr. Jones is not unaware that "sexual conflict" and "guilt complex" are related to the original damage inflicted on the child by hostile parents ("Indeed, a clinical history of the Clemens family would have all the well-rounded symmetry of a textbook case."), his awareness of the total pattern of frustration, repression, anxiety, and defense is feeble and flickering. "Sexual conflict" does not, as Mr. Jones somewhat mechanistically assumes, suddenly erupt at puberty to give "an already established habit [guilt] both direction and intensity."

Although there is no reason for becoming angry with Mr. Jones, with the editors of PLA and their manuscript readers, and with Dr. William G. Barrett, president of the American Psychoanalytic Association, who offered expert opinion on Mr. Jones's manuscript, I should like to suggest that they are not serving well either psychology or the psychological criticism of literature and biography by warping the central insight of depth psychology. That insight -- agreed.

upon by Freudian and non-Freudian alike -- is that the individual must be seen as an unique pattern of security and insecurity, a pattern that is formed in early childhood by kinds and degrees of frustration, repression, anxiety, and defense. This pattern, whatever it may be, is from beginning to end the one and only "conflict." It is one's subtle and complex and all-pervasive admixture of love and hostility towards the parents (the source of the conflict), towards oneself, and towards the world. Twain's ambivalent feeling about sex -- and money, prestige, and his art, I might add -- is but a manifestation of his basic conflict, and not something fundamental in itself. (Parenthetically, fundamental ambivalence can be called "sexual conflict" provided the phrase is clearly understood to mean the individual's feelings of security and insecurity about his sexual role in his particular culture.) Although I am not certain that anyone who has not experienced a good deal of therapy or analysis can grasp with much steadiness this meaning, I am sure that it must be understood if one is to profitably investigate Mark Twain, or any man.

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MELVILLE'S POETRY: ITS SYMBOLS OF INDIVIDUATION

The implicit psychological assumptions of the poetry of Melville's old age reveal more about the moral and emotional attitudes of Melville than does the one prose work of this phase, Billy Budd, which has hitherto literally hogged the critical spotlight. The novel ought to be closely related to the poetry, for, as I will show, an analysis of a group of poems included in John Marr and Other Sailors will reveal what can only be defined as a search for psychic balance.

I

In the main these poems bear witness to the apparently senseless reign of death, to catastrophe and tragedy which spring out of the unknown with impersonal finality. They are the objective correlative of memories which haunt the vision of Melville like nightmares; they are nightmares, terrors of the unconscious which distort his dreams; they are verbal representations of those intimations of personal disaster which threaten the poet inwardly and outwardly.

In limiting these horrors, unforgettable trauma of experience, to the locale of the sea, Melville discloses something of his intentions. The recurrent imagery suggests that he is endeavoring to reconcile himself to the monstrous Gorgons of anxiety and insecurity -- deep-seated spiritual and emotional problems whose naked forms paralyze his thought like the Medusa. But, as he evokes these shapes of reminiscence and nocturnal fantasy in the various poems, a peculiar psychic phenomenon seems to unfold.

The imagery in "Tuft of Kelp" clearly

reveals the transfiguration that an impression of despair undergoes through the medium of poetry. For the careless reader the following lines may appear to communicate utter disillusionment:

All dripping in tangles of green,
Cast up by a lonely sea
If purer for that, O Weed,
Bitterer, too, are ye?

Such an interpretation, however, is valid only if one ignores the terminal punctuation. The sudden interrogation, syntactically addressed to the eye and not to the ear, is a deliberate artifice which negates the burden of bitterness. Indeed, the seaweed in its calcined state is a symbol of transfiguration, a mutation of the spirit, signalled by the question mark, which is achieved despite his immersion in the stinging salt of the sea -- life. In effect, truth is loosed from the matted "tangle of green," an image of hopelessness, to be sure, but one which is deprived of its potential of torment.

A similar transvaluation of experience is embodied in "The Aeolian harp." In the romantic sense, the harp is a symbol of poetic inspiration, an extra-mundane whisper of eternity. Not so for Melville. Instead, its "mad crescendo" invites consideration of man's transitory existence:

Listen: less a strain ideal
Than Ariel's rendering of the Real.
What the Real is, let hint
A picture stamped on memory's mint.

The outer representation of reality is really an inner one, an intuition into the la-

tent fears of contingent circumstances which man is called upon to face without the assistance of an Ariel. It is entirely possible with Melville's knowledge of the Bible that this is not the airy spirit of Shakespeare's Tempest; instead it may well be an ironic reference to the "Lion of God." This deliberate verbal booby trap would not do violence to the first interpretation; rather it would slyly mediate man's hopeless alienation from God. Another passage, following a reflection on the cleavage of man and nature, supports the idea of lonely estrangement:

Drifted, drifted, day by day,
Piloted of pathless way.
It has drifted till each plank
Is oozy as the oyster-bank;
Drifted, drifted, night by night
Craft that never shows a light;
Not ever, to prevent worse knell,
Tolls in the fog the warning bell.

These lines image the plight not only of ships in the path of the floating derelict but also of man on earth.

The lyrical dirge concluding the poem restates this in another way:

O, the sailors -- O, the sails!
O, the lost crews never heard of:
Well the harp of Ariel wails
Thoughts that the tongue can tell
no word of!

The tongue cannot give utterance to the merciless truth. However, let us examine how Melville reconciles himself to it. Irony is again the leavening balm, spiced with a flippant ambiguity. The first two lines explicitly articulate the apparently indefinable problem of human fate; the last two lines resolve it. The use of "well" must here be understood as "fortunately" -- the key of "the Real" for the poet. The wailing harp is then not a symbol of melancholy and despair. It is Ariel's own confession of impotence. It is the unspeakable truth with which Melville is teaching himself to live. At the same time it is an exorcism of his former fear of this immitigable state, once furtively concealed in memory but now brought out into the light of defiant consciousness.

"The Maldive Shark" continues the search for inner dignity and strength, this time summoning up the Gorgon terrors of his unconscious in the concrete image of these Underworld goddessess. As in the previous poem, the emotional context is retrospective; an incident of the past is redefined in the vision of the poet's old age. He remembers a maldive shark and the pilot-fish in attendance on it. (Is Melville here pointing up the ludicrous paradox of this ravenous creature's tutelary guide in contrast with man's pilotless status in "The Aeolian Harp?") Probably he intends to convey his emerging belief that the individual must condition himself to those very forces which, at a whim, can destroy him:

But liquidly glide on his ghastly flank
Or before his Gorgonian head;
Or lurk in his port of serrated teeth
In white triple tiers of glittering
gates,
And there find a heaven when peril's a-
broad,
An asylum in jaws of the Fates.

The identification of the Gorgons with the Fates represents the crucial transition of this knowledge into an absolute conviction on the part of Melville. In the canon of his literary works the image of the three Fates is ubiquitous, but one must distinguish between its function in the early prose works and in this late poetry. As he first envisions the life-death goddesses -- for instance, in Moby Dick, Mardi, and Pierre -- they are omnipotent, irresistible; against them even the gods may not contend. This is the earliest Greek understanding of them as opposed to their rationalization into moral forces by the later philosophers. For Melville, too, they were primal data -- once. But now, as he makes them the counterparts of the Gorgons, he tacitly questions their invulnerability. The weaver goddesses are connected with the upper world; but, when Melville transposes their domain with that of the underworld Gorgons, he records a profound psychological truth. The remorseless Fates are no more than man's unconscious terror of the unknown, the primitive fears which have deposed him from his essential dignity. To come to an awareness of this self-deception is to confront "the Real" on the level of redemptive knowledge.

This is the interpretation, I believe, that the poet urges upon the reader, for despite the sinister evocation of the preceding passage, in the one which follows there is no expression of horror:

Where is the world we roved, Ned Bunn?
Hollows thereof lay rich in shade
By voyagers old inviolate thrown
Ere Paul Pry cruised with Pelf and
Trade.
To us old lads some thoughts come home
Who roamed a world young lads no more
shall roam.

In the structural sense the first reminiscence is cancelled out by the second. It is as if in the immediate moment of reliving this experience he has gained an "armored" insight into a truth which in his youth was the product of innocence. In Melville's reference to "voyagers old" he seems to suggest that he himself once, like Perseus favored by the gods, had been able to withstand the vision of the Medusa by some intervention of supernatural providence, believing perhaps that the Greek hero had slain the terrible Gorgons and left the shades, as he states, "inviolate." In context, of course, the allusion to Ned Bunn is to Toby of Typee. Both of them had been able to accommodate their lives to the Gorgons of primitive culture, Melville through Fayaway (the name, in all probability, an anagram of fay or fate and away, his punning solution to all perplexing problems). In any event, she eased his obsession with the monsters of his own imaginative deeps -- those Moby Dicks which, in his subsequent intellectual development, the nostrums of philosophy and theology failed to expel from his mind. For man cannot defeat the sovereignty of the life-death goddesses by the shield of a vulnerable innocence. So it is that he views the needlesome Paul Prys who voyage with "Pelf and Trade," the canting missionaries who followed the commercial fleets of the world, combining with the exploitative, economic forces to pierce the shield of the Polynesian Athene who had pro-

tected the natives from the Universal Gorgons.

The condition of the spirit enjoyed by Melville for an interlude in his youth was soon lost in years of enslavement to the tyranny of arrogant reason which atrophied the delicate foundations of his faith. Now, in his old age, he realizes that contemporary culture, even the entire career of Western civilization, has not produced a Hermes who can lead man through the pitfalls of the Underworld and immobilize the terrors of memory and fantasy. In order to cope with the malignant forces of the universe, within and without, the individual is driven in upon himself. Without an organizing religious or social myth, he must reach a compromise with the Gorgon-Fates. Unlike Ahab or Taji or Pierre, Melville does reach such a compromise. He exorcises the hideous demons of his imagination by transforming them into the embodiments of art, through sublimation achieving a transfiguration of fear and insecurity by a denial of the Fates without. Thus, in the coda of "The Maldive Shark," the poet, in a tone of faint amusement, dismisses the shark as a "pleasure-hunter," discounting the power of the life-death Gorgon-Fates:

Nor less the satiate year impends
When wearying of routine resorts,
The pleasure-hunter shall break loose.

But underlying this jocularity is a serious commentary on the dislocating antinomies of existence. The image of the wheeling movement of time in association with "routine resorts" and the "pleasure-hunter" is less an allusion to the passive maldive shark of the poem than a subdued evaluation of good and evil. "The satiate year" is a symbol of the seasonal cycle, a promise of recurrence, as the new year succeeds the old. By the same token, "the pleasure-hunter" is man, "bored with "routine resorts." This flight of wit, of course, takes us back to the Garden of Eden, to the archetypal scene of en-nui. Therefore, as Adam and Eve sinned, so will man; as evil supplanted good, so will good reverse the process. And man will forever be called upon to conquer the Gorgons of anxiety released by these alternations: this is the formula of his destiny. But without the psychopomps of old he will perish among the ugly monsters unwittingly endowed with the power of his fears (the devils of negation in our tradition) -- that is, unless like Perseus he too discovers a mediating providence within himself: the redemptive magic of assured selfhood.

Yet, while this is the poet's conviction, he can only prophesy a doleful future for man in general in "The Berg." Since he deliberately uses the subtitle "(A Dream)," the reader is directly asked to equate "the berg" with the image of self-annihilation which constantly beckons to man from his unconscious. Literally the poem pictures the destruction of a ship which plunges into a submerged mass of ice. But in the light of Melville's persistent use of the ship as a microcosm of the world, I think we may validly make a similar identification here. In fact, the ironic diction of the opening lines predicates mankind on the verge of suicide:

I saw a ship of martial build
(Her standards set, her brave apparel
on)

Directed as by madness mere
Against a solid iceberg steer,
Nor budge it, though the infatuate ship
went down.

This, of course, is a figurative suicide -- the bankruptcy of man's legitimate life-goals. Surely "standards," in the context of the parenthetical statement, is susceptible of elucidation in terms other than banners or flags. "Values" integrate even more meaningfully with the metaphor of "brave apparel," an ironical thrust at the arrogance of human pretensions. This gloss is enforced by the obvious pejorative, "the infatuate ship." Here the modifier, I believe, represents a conscious use of ambiguity. It suggests the loss of judgment connected with moral blindness, as in the Greek conception of infatuation, emphasizing the spiritual hypocrisy of the cultural goals of society.

The symbol of the iceberg also gathers its meaning from this environment of ideas. Seven-eighths submerged in the seas, literally, it carries, in the figurative sense, intimations of those impulses towards self-destruction which, psychologically, rear out of the depths of the unconscious. The poet's elemental image of the berg captures Melville's keen awareness of the inscrutable influence of death over human destiny:

Though lumbish thou, a lumbering one --
A lumbering lubbard loitering slow,
Impingers rue thee and go down,
Sounding the precipice below
Nor stir the slimy slug that sprawls
Along thy dead indifference of walls.

He allies the human fear of death with man's estrangement from primal nature, not only without him but within him. This insight operates in Melville's conception of the white whale. Psychologically, Ahab's obsession with the vindictive evil of Moby Dick is simply its unconscious identification with the death urge buried deep in his own being: the symbolic equivalent of his loss of a vital design for life. Melville implies that his culture has failed to provide this knowledge: "The impetuous ship in bafflement went down." Man unwittingly seeks death in order to mitigate the tensions of his rampant ego. His culture has not provided him with those rites de passage which enable him to contend with the contingencies of life and death, to move from one state of being to another with assurance. This, however, is not Melville's plight. He conjures the berg in a dream and recognizes it for what it is: a warning to his ego that it must guard against those primitive eruptions of death which reside within and without. Experientially, it is an epiphany; it reiterates the truth of which the Gorgon-Fates are the custodians: the life-death cycle is the paradigm of human destiny.

In "Old Counsel" the poet repeats the same thought with cryptic brevity:

Come out the Golden Gate,
Go round the Horn with streamers,
Carry royals early and late;
But, brother, be not over-elated --
All hands save ship! has startled dreamers.

Though the poem may appear to be self-explanatory in denotative language, the rubric of the italicized line denies this. It may be equated with the image of the berg as the imperative voice of man's lower instincts, dissuading him from egocentric preoccupations. In a similar way the journey itself, in its immediate association with romantic adventure, is reduced to a negative symbol in which the thought of death becomes transcendent. And is not the "Old Counsel" of the title another symbol of this wisdom, now denied man by the pragmatic aspirations of his culture?

Melville's contemplation of nature in "The Man-of-War Hawk" illuminates this predicament still further. In the first image cluster he manipulates contrasts of black and white in order to symbolize the rigid balance of life and death in the universe:

You black man-of-war hawk that wheels
in the light
O'er the black ship's white sky-s'l,
sunned cloud to sight,
Have we low-flyers wings to ascend
to his height?

The denial which ensues as an answer to this question mocks at the piteous limitations of man's pretentious intellectual and spiritual knowledge. It dramatizes his lost intimacy with nature, silently asking whether he has found an adequate substitute for the ancient relationship:

No arrow can reach him; no thought
can attain
To the placid supreme in the sweep
of his reign.

In the view of the total poem this answer asserts that man has lost the impeccable instinct which allows the hawk to live in harmony with life and death or good and evil. The poet tells us that rational understanding cannot explain this phenomenon in the abstractions of thought or in the vapid pieties of convention. If this is so, then the human condition is indeed a desperate one. Its life-goals, in their ego-orientation, are illusions. They portend a bleak annihilation that deprives human destiny of any purpose.

II

A deceptive explicitness characterizes the next group of poems. This in itself, however, is a poetic device; for, beneath the surface obviousness, a serpentine wit uncoils with a flourish of rollicking irony. The dramatic situation in "The Good Craft 'Snow Bird,'" for instance, is resolved in scorn of inhuman commercialism. Yet there is no bitterness evident. One can see that the efficiency of trade must be served, even though it is at the expense of human comfort and pain:

Brigs that figs for market gather,
Homeward-bound upon the stretch,
Encounter oft this uglier weather,
Yet in the end their port they fetch.

Ostensibly this casual observation reflects the fact of the matter, no more. But in the midst of this objectivity the poet calls attention to something else in the inexcusable rhyming of "brigs" and "figs." Here he springs loose the counter of his wit in the poem: the concept of "fig" truth. As the

next stanza indicates, the only thing of importance is that the voyage has been economically successful:

What if sleet off-shore assailed her,
What though ice yet plates her yards;
In wintry port not less she renders
Summer's gift with warm regards!

But though the implicit question of the first two lines seems unambiguous, this is not so. "Summer's gift" for the poet is the ripeness of wisdom that contrasts with the "fig" truth of barter and profit. By recourse to the language of the mart, its anti-poetic metaphors and avid attitudes, Melville condemns the values of the commercial mind, particularly its impersonal regard for man:

And look, the underwriter's man,
Timely, when the stevedore's done,
Puts on his specs to pry and scan,
And sets her down -- A, No. 1.

Again this is all denotative. The cleverness of the indictment now turns on the controlling image of the fig. The judgment of the inspector correlates with the pejorative meaning of the fruit: its contemptuous triviality. His penetrating discernment is virtual blindness; even more, it is moral blindness. The fig-leaf context of the punishment of Adam and Eve (in Christian iconography the fig is often substituted for the apple of the Tree of Knowledge) presupposes that man has learned the difference between good and evil. Such is not the case. He perpetuates the sin of Eve's covetousness in her moment of temptation, having failed to profit from the truth of the Fall. Hence Melville turns to the incorruptible touchstone of knowledge -- transfiguring awareness of the exact nature of the world in which he lives:

Bravo, master! Brava, brig!
For slanting snows are out of the
West
Never the Snow-Bird cares one fig;
And foul winds steady her, though
a pest.

Rejected in the disharmony of the colloquial "pest" are all considerations of "fig" truth on its three levels of reference. Each is as absurd as the other; each is a mode of self-deception. Apotheosized are the snows in their cold intimacy with death ("West"). In this abandonment of all "fig" knowledge, Melville aligns his spirit with the philosophy of "the Real."

A similar ambiguity is embodied in "The Figure-Head." The work is pure bawdry, but its wit takes into consideration another aspect of man's apparently predestined unhappiness: the decline of sexuality as it is overwhelmed by the irresistible force of age. The poet sets up his sexual gambit, as he so often does in his prose works, by a reference to a bride. But first he organizes his strategy of Rabelaisian wit in a parenthetical impression:

The Charles-and-Emma seaward sped,
(Named for the carven pair at prow,)
He so smart, and a curly head,
She tricked forth as a bride knows how:
Pretty stem for the port, I trow!

If one is acquainted with the poet's persistent use of the prow as a phallic euphemism (in "The Huglets" its meaning is incontestable: "The prow, a seedsman, sows the spray."), it is not difficult to interpret the last line where "stem" and "port" are brought into association with the sexual implications of "bride." The connotation of other words may also be brought into focus without too much ingenuity.

The next stanza develops the causes of the separation of the embraced figures on the prow:

But iron-rust and alum-spray
And chafing gear, and sun and dew
Vexed this lad and lassie gay,
Tears in their eyes, salt tears few;
And the hug relaxed with the
failing glue.

In the context which has been established the reader can make his own interpretations, keeping in mind the "chafing gear" and "failing glue." The smirking innocence of "alum spray" and "dew" add of course to the developing ribaldry.

But however rawly turned the first two stanzas, the representation of emotional reality is poetically justified in the light of Melville's purpose -- the highly serious claim of wit. The deliberate vulgarity is designed to contrast with the wrenching poignancy of the concluding verse. And Melville's logic is sound. One needs only to experience the emotional impact of the magnificent last line to understand why sexual frustration tears at the very heart of eternal nature:

But came in end a dismal night,
With creaking beams and ribs that groan,
A black lee-shore and waters white:
Dropped on the reef, the pair lie prone:
O, the breakers dance, but the winds
make moan!

The spent energy of the act of love is transformed into an elegaic convulsion in the womb of life -- the sea. The living face of death grimaces in this invitation to the grave. Thus the title of "The Figure-Head" must be interpreted in the sense of appearance as opposed to reality. And if considered in the light of the sexual connotations, then frustration, as it tyrannizes the emotions, intones a threat of death in life. I do not wish to imply that this is a personal experience of the poet. However, one cannot deny that it might be his own wry and self-mocking assessment of the adjustments demanded by old age.

Another poem, "Crossing the Tropics," directly supports Melville's preoccupation with sexuality in the specific terms of frustration (not forgetting, of course, "After the Pleasure Party"):

While now the Pole Star sinks from sight
The Southern Cross it climbs the sky;
But losing thee, my love, my light,
O bride but for one bridal night,
The loss no rising joys supply.

These lines are a painful expression of separation from and longing for the beloved, and they explicitly broach the problem of sexual frustration. The shuttlecock of wit in this instance is whipped into motion by the controlling image of the cross, the mute

swastika in the dipper of Ursa Major, the constellation which points towards the Pole Star, and its overt antipodal counterpart. The familiar sexual overtones of this ancient symbol, in the tension of north and south, clearly explicate the pun, "no rising joys supply." And in the lines which follow, the accent of emotion is plainly sensual:

Love, love, the Trade Winds urge abaft,
And thee, from thee, they steadfast waft.

Here "the Trade Winds" are unquestionably the creative urge of the cosmological myths. Symbolically the ardent passions of love are alienating forces, the furies of frustration. The almost maddening consequences of this separation are caught in an image of time and the seasons, a complex death-in-life metaphor. Melville holds this perception out of the seasonal change which is reversed when one crosses the equator, in this case turning summer into winter:

When, cut by the slanting sleet, we swoop
Where raves the world's inverted year,
If roses all your porch should loop,
Not less your heart for me will droop
Doubling the world's last outpost
drear.

The sexual rose of summer is doomed in the winter of despair. The emotions of the poetic voice succumb to the paralysis of frustration:

O love, O love, these oceans vast!
Love, love, it is as death were past!

The ocean impinges on the poet's eye in the double vision of the womb and the grave. Aphrodite Urania rises out of the sea in her death-in-life aspect, the Gorgon frustrator and destroyer, as the early mythologists knew her, "the eldest of the Fates." Certainly this poem springs out of a context of experience parallel to "The Figure-Head," and, in each, separation is conceived in the image of death, as if life were inextricably bound up in man's subjective Underworld where the Gorgons rule almost with impunity.

III

The next sampling of poems posits the final condition of the poet's psychic reconciliation with the menacing forms of "the Real." In this statement of his credo of existence he renounces the traditional aspiration to return to the innocence of the Garden of Eden before the Fall. His metaphorical attack on this illusion hinges on the image of the Golden Age, and he unequally tunes the harp of his poetic muse to the grim harmonic of individual despair. "To Ned," for instance, is a nostalgic memory of the first impressions of the South Seas, now, however, seen in the perspective of assimilated wisdom:

But we, in anchor watches calm,
The Indian Psyche's languor won,
And, musing, breathed primeval balm
From Edens ere yet overrun;
Marvelling mild if mortal twice,
Here and hereafter, touch a Paradise.

These lines conclude the poem, and in their tone of playful skepticism negate the romantic affirmation. As a Typee-truant he discovered it was possible for the natives but not for him to live as

... if lost to Saturn's Age,
Yet feeling life no Syrian pilgrimage.

The paradox is that the natives, even though they did not live in the Golden Age, believed in an organizing myth that resolved the questions of good and evil within the framework of their society. If lost to death, as the image of "Saturn's Age" suggests, they still intuited a meaningful purpose in life. In the case of Melville this assurance did not come until the poetry of this period; his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, some thirty years earlier, did more to undermine than to sustain his faith in the Christian myth. Melville's attitude toward human experience is now conciliatory, but on its ground and in its terms, not in those of any kind of supernatural sanction of prescribed behavior. This is seen in his rejection of the impossible fantasy of the Golden Age:

Ah, Ned, what years and years ago!
Well, Adam advances, smart in pace,
But scarce by violets that advance
you trace.

In his adamic character man makes progress (towards Death?) but not under the emblem of the shy and humble violet, an edenic garland; rather he advances under the banner of his ancestral progenitor whose name in its Hebrew derivation means "red earth," an etymology certainly familiar to Melville. Indirectly, therefore, the poet asserts that man's destiny is rooted in the earth — in the cycle of life and death as only nature defines it. The tone of these lines, so opposed to the nostalgic sentimentality of the opening verses, proposes the death of the former illusion.

In consequence of this epiphany in "The Enviable Isles" he continues his depreciation of the fantasy of the Golden Age. For with wry humor he points out that such pleasures could only exist if our Jobian God were to lapse into a state of powerless stupor:

But, inland, where the sleep that folds
the hills
A dreamier sleep, the trance of God,
instills —
On uplands hazed, in wandering airs
aswoon
Slow-swaying palms salute love's cypress
croon
Adown in vale where pebbly runlets croon
A song to lull all sorrow and all glee.

An inertia of love akin to death is pre-empted in this absence of the tension of contraries; "love's cypress croon" is the paradox which explains the necessary roles of all forms of good and evil — personal and transpersonal. Without polaric strife there is only stagnation. Inwardly and outwardly man progresses towards the fullness of individuation in accordance with his ability to reconcile himself to this eternal structure of psychic and physical reality.

In the swinish coma of dream he is oblivious to this truth, and therefore he forfeits all claims to human dignity. Without the tragic sense of life he lingers in the childhood of an undeveloped soul:

Sweet-fern and moss in many a glade are
hers,
Where, strown in flocks, what cheek-
flushed myriads lie
Dimpling in dreams — unconscious slum-
berers mere
Where billows endlessly round the
billows die.

The devaluative image of the flocks compares this escape from "the Real" to bestial bliss. It ridicules the retreat from the raging seas of fate in the last line, for these are the creative norms of man's actual service to life on earth. The prototype of these supine figures is Melville's last defeated hero, Billy Budd, whose innocence was the unwisdom of experience denied or of the soul in childish rebellion against growth. One is compelled to draw this conclusion in his reaction to the judgment of doom pronounced upon him: "That adolescent expression previously noted ["warm-tinted" as opposed to "cheek-flushed"] as his, taking on something akin to the look of a slumbering child in the cradle For now and then in the gyved one's trance a serene happy light born of some wandering reminiscence or dream would diffuse itself over his face, and then wane away only anew to return." The poetry and prose of Melville's old age are thus in conjunction; both reflect the new balance of his psyche — the advent of a wisdom that admits the basic function of the law of opposites.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Wilton L. Miller, M. D., Nostalgia: A Psychoanalytic Study of Marcel Proust
(Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956. Pp. xii+306
including bibliography and index. \$4.00)

It is a basic tenet of this journal that if a work of psychodynamic criticism sends us forth with a wish to reread an author and his works with greater insight, then we must acknowledge that that work has accomplished its purpose. Dr. Miller's study is an explication on a grand scale. He has cut a deeper swath through Proust's "forêt de symboles" than has ever been done before. As a psychoanalyst he has been able to evaluate the clinical observation which Proust recorded in much of his imagery, and so to come up with a clearer picture of the au-

thor's neurosis and its relation to his art. Proust's every character trait is singled out and analyzed; yet the author never for a moment loses sight of the magnificent edifice which is "the integrated form of his [Proust's] work" (p. 5).

The organization of the work is spiral. After a foreword in which the author acknowledges his indebtedness to Dr. Thomas M. French, disingenuously disavows any purpose to write a work of literary criticism, and points out the necessity, in order "to bridge the gap between the aesthetic and scientific

attitudes," for "employing the language of psychiatry and of aesthetics, but often departing from both, in order to make use of Proust's vocabulary of special images" (p. viii), the work proper begins with a chapter devoted to biographical data. Then follow seven chapters, each devoted to one volume of A la recherche du temps perdu, a chapter comparing the whole work to Hardy's The Well-Beloved, another on symbolism, successive chapters dealing with symbolism, the relations between Proust and Freud, Proust's homosexuality, Proust's asthma, Proust's themes compared with the theories of Dr. French, the functioning of memory during psychoanalysis, the use of dreams, and a final chapter embodying preliminary conclusions. There are two appendices, dealing respectively with unconscious insights in Proust's earlier work and further theoretical comments regarding Proust's use of symbolism. There is a consistent elucidation of the parallelism between Proust's aesthetic theories and Freud's, without belaboring the knotty problem of direct influence.

Proust's intuitive insight was tremendous, and his unconscious symbolism provided the elements needed, but which might otherwise, perhaps because of his repressions, have been lacking, to produce a final work of unsurpassed quality. His own observations are quoted by Dr. Miller (p. 286):

... réalité qui est celle que nous ne sentons pas pendant que nous vivons les moments, car nous les rapportons à un but égoïste, mais qui, dans ces brusques retours de la mémoire désintéressée, nous fait flotter entre le présent et le passé; essence qui nous trouble en ce qu'elle est nous-même, ce nous-même que nous ne sentons pas au moment, mais que nous retrouvons comme un miel délicieux resté après les choses quand elles sont loin de nous. . ." (Jean Santeuil, Vol. II, p. 339)

The reality which Proust sought was the "core of his own ego. . ." He had the genius, and one might say also, the neurosis for just this one kind of aesthetic sublimation, oriented toward the past rather than the present or future" (p. 286). Miller points out clearly the neurotic pattern demonstrated in the work; to wit, aggression (against the parents whom he loved dependently), aggression which was erotized defensively; the erotization, however, being tied to homosexual or incestuous objects, thus causing gigantic conflicts.

The purposes served by Proust's literary creation were manifold. His work was essentially a propitiatory gesture toward his departed loved ones, fulfilling their ideals that he be aesthetically creative. It was a cathartic necessity for him to reveal the "truth" about himself. Lastly, Proust felt that his mother would "live" only so long as he "remembered" her. If he did not recreate her by his writing, he would encompass her death and thereby his own (for he could not endure the thought of separation.)

Dr. Miller does not fail to note the influence of Bergson's philosophy on the early Proust, both as it regarded will and memory, but we are led far beyond these data by the circuitous path that all analysts follow

when they study their patients. By disclosing one aspect after another of the basic Proust - pattern as it began in the earlier writings and was re-elaborated in Remembrance of Things Past, Miller is able to reveal a structure that is at the core of Proust's inner conflict. "The successful writing of his book probably prevented psychosis. The creation of his whole existence provided restoration, reunion with all he loved most and felt he must have lost, particularly his 'eternal union' with his mother" (p. 286).

His attempt at self-analysis is achieved by converting memory into symbolism of the most poignant kind.

What I should like people to see in my book is that it sprang wholly from the application of a special sense. . . which is very difficult to describe (like trying to describe sight to a blind man) to those who have never exercised it. . . . It is perhaps like a telescope, which is pointed at time, because a telescope reveals stars which are invisible to the naked eye, and I have tried. . . to reveal to the conscious mind unconscious phenomena which, wholly forgotten, sometimes lie very far back in the past. . . . (From a letter to Camille Vettard, quoted by Miller at p. 154.)

Proust's images, as well as his dream-pictures, are hieroglyphs of his inner tensions. They must be deciphered as carefully as are the elaborations of a patient under treatment. His style reveals a symmetry (reminiscent of his father's talent for organization) which are a perfect foil for the bizarre experiences which take shape under his pen. He projects various aspects of his own personality onto various characters, chief among them Charlus, Swann, and even Robert de Saint-Loup (who is otherwise a brother figure). His own love objects are projected (often in distorted form) onto the Duchesse de Guermantes, Mme. Verdurin, Mme. Swann, Mme. de Villeparisis, even "la Marquise" (the attendant at the comfort station in the park). The younger women, it is interesting to note, almost invariably have feminine adaptations of masculine names (Albertine, André, Gilberte).

Proust's jealousy of his father and the sense of "betrayal" by his mother (in having a second child, Robert) are constantly re-enacted in the fantasies of Swann's jealous love for Odette and in Albertine's imagined(?) affairs. For Proust love was equated with suffering, the acme of which was separation. We recall how the impending tragedy of separation hovered over Marcel, Swann, Charlus.

We must always bear in mind that a hieroglyph is a highly composite message, and that if this same message is repeated in variations, it may spell out as SOS. To say that Remembrance of Things Past is the result of Proust's regressive drives is a simplification that distorts the intricate structure of personal symbolism. The reader, like the analyst, must attempt to reconstruct, through the emotionally charged images, the full message immanent therein. The pattern (message) shows: erotized aggression; self-aggression (masochism) implicit in his

provoking and quarrelsome attitude toward others; followed by propitiatory gestures (gifts); disguised desire to kill (e.g., Charlus' unrealized designs on the life of Morel; the death of Saint-Loup in the War of 1914); identification with the mother, motivating his assumption of the feminine role; desire for impregnation (wish to be loved by the father); anguish at the thought of separation from the love object; the all-pervasive death-wish.

Despite occasional infelicities in style, a tendency to use a work of literary analysis as a forum for the presentation of minutiae of psychoanalytic theory, an over-dependence on hypothetical parallels with clinical observations, Dr. Miller's task has been well done.

E. B. M.

H. D., Tribute to Freud (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956. Pp. ix+180. \$2.50)

One variety of literary pot-boiler which has become a commonplace of recent years has been the patient's story of his (or her) psychoanalysis. Anyone with a facility in writing, it would seem, has attempted, often successfully, to recoup the cost of an analysis by reducing the process to writing. The results have ranged from utter bores through semi-pornographic shockers to valuable works of bibliotherapy. (In the last-named category Lucy Freeman's Fight Against Fears comes to mind.) H. D.'s work differs from all its predecessors in three outstanding ways. It is written by a poet rather than by a journalist; it is based on an analysis begun in 1934, carried on during Freud's London exile, originally published in England in 1944, and re-published in the United States in honor of the 1956 centenary; and, most important of all, the analyst was Sigmund Freud.

The therapeutic elements of the analysis are suggested rather than recounted in detail. The most effective and unusual aspect of the "confession" is the account of the symbolic visual hallucinations which the author experienced in Greece shortly after the First World War. The most interesting aspect of the work is the picture which it gives of Freud as analyst, "blameless physician," and father-substitute. The publication of a selection of letters from Freud

to the author adds something rather personal and touching to the recaptured picture of the sage of Vienna.

This brief account may best be concluded by a quotation from the excellent introduction which has been written for this edition by Dr. Merrill Moore:

When H. D. first published this work in an English magazine, it carried the title "Writing on the Wall." The title crystallizes a vast content in a few words. Its meaning will be different for each individual but this is part of what it means to me: the wall is Reality, the artist is the Creator, creating is projecting, the artist (or dreamer) creates by projecting what is in his or her mind onto the wall of reality which is the wall of the world. . . . Freud in his way was a poet, and it is as a poet that H. D. reports him by the same steps that he became known to her. . . . The book thus celebrates the meaningfulness of human individuality. It is a poem or a poetic prose entity, a dramatized integrated unique message and communication of one spirit to another. (P. viii, ix)

L. F. M.

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Renato Poggiali, "Tragedy or Romance? A Reading of the Paolo and Francesca Episode in Dante's Inferno," 313-58

Christoph E. Schweitzer, "Wilhelm Meister und das Bild vom kranken Königsohn," 419-32

Ludwig Marcuse, "Freuds Ästhetik," 446-63

Professor Marcuse's concluding words may stimulate discussion and disagreement — as, indeed, the entire paper may do as well:

Die Wirkung . . . , die Freuds Lehre auf Künstler des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts ausgeübt hat, ist wohl nur ausnahmsweise festzustellen. Sobald Ideen in einer Zeit Allgemeingut werden, ist der Versuch . . . Abhängigkeiten zu finden, hoffnungslos. (p. 463)

A S W E G O T O P R E S S

Publication note: As this issue goes to press, your Editors have received an announcement of a quarterly journal, Behavioral Science, founded in 1956, and published at Mt. Royal and Guilford Avenues, Baltimore 2, Maryland. Although the general tone of the prospectus indicates interest only in the psychological, anthropological, and sociological aspects of "behavioral science," the prospectus does carry the following interesting proposal:

We are aware of no present journal with a primary policy of making its pages available to representatives of any field — the humanities, the social sciences, the biological and medical sciences, and the physical sciences — to discuss theory concerning behavior. . . . We shall try to achieve this end. (P. 3)